

[Hugh M. Wood's Story]

Interview

Mrs. Belle Kilgore

718 Wallace Street

Clovis, New Mexico 2nd

MAR 6 1937

1,200 Words

Hugh M. Wood's Story

Mr. Hugh M. Wood and wife, 711 Wallace Street, Clovis, New Mexico, came with a colony of thirty-five families from Ft. Worth, Texas and settled near Melrose and St Vrain, in Sept 1907. Mr. Wood took up a claim one and one-half mile from St Vrain. In 1908, Mr. Wood moved his family to Melrose for school purposes. Of course, they had to go back and forth to the claim to hold it. After they proved up they moved to Clovis in 1910.

These families organized a Melworth Club among themselves. They organized the first Sunday School in [that?] part of the country and met at Mr. Wood's home every Sunday, for they had a three room house and a piano. Mr.s Edeilbrook was the pianist, she was a pipe organ plaer in [?] Forth Worth. Mr. J. C. Riley, Mrs. Wood's father [was?] Supt. of the Union Sunday School.

“Our house would be filled and the yard also, for every one was anxious to talk to their neighbors and [hear?] from ‘back home’

Library of Congress

"We never made anything for three years,, but if we had we could had have sold it, for there was no market. The first year we came out, I bought feed for 1¢ a bundle. One year it looked as if we were going to raise a crop. One morning we found our corn white with antelopes, there were about thirty of them in the field. We used the dogs to keep the prairie chickens out of our garden. The rattlesnakes were awful bad, too, we had to [C18 N. Mex?] 2 carry a stick or a hoe every where we went to protect ourselves. The wolves were so bad that we had to build houses close and tight to keep them away from the chickens. We men would have a bit of fun digging the wolves out of the holes in the ground," said Mr. Wood.

"Yes, and there was a white Lobo wolf in the country, as well as the brown ones. When they howled it seemed that they just shook the ground, spoke up Mrs. Wood.

"One morning, early in the spring, a man came to the door," continued Mrs. Wood, "and asked if I had seen a cow. 'no, I said, 'but I saw her tracks. She has been in my garden."

Well, why did you come out here for?" he asked.

"We came out here to get land of course," I answered.

"Well, this is my land." he said.

"Did you turn your cow loose on us?" I asked.

Yes, I turned her out and I am going to turn some more out," he said, and he walked away and I found out it was Wild Horse Brown. So sure enough a heard of 37 cattle was soon tramping down our crops. But the men drove the cattle off our claim onto the next man's claim and he in turn drove them on to the other man's claim until they had been driven several miles away. They kept them moving until when Mr. Brown found them the could only get about fifteen."

Library of Congress

In a few weeks the Melworth Club decided to have a picnic. We went several miles south of Melrose down [?] Alkali Lake, which was dry and grassy. Soon after we had stopped and got unpacked getting ready for a good time, a man rode up.

"Hello," he said, "you are the woman I talked to once about the cattle," said the rider.

"Yes, and you are the man who drove his cattle into our crop," said Mrs. Wood.

"Well, I live in that big house on top of thill and you folks just send up there and ger all the milk and buter and eggs you want. [?] I'm Wil Horse Brown," hesaid.

"Won't you stay and eat with us?" I asked him. "Yes, I'll go and get my wife." he replied. They came back and we had a very pleasant evening. A cloud [mass?] rising, but as we had not seen a rain since we had been out here we paid no attention to it.

"You people come up to the house for it is going to rain," requested Mr. Brown.

"Well it has'nt rained since we have been out here, so we are not afraid." we told him.

All of us women put down the mattresses and slept in the lake. The men were higher up on the sides of the lake, and we were all bedded down for the night, where there was a flood 4 of rain fell and before we could get out of the lake, our mattresses and clothes were floating. As we wore [rats?] in our hair then and took them off at night, these rats were floating around in the water. But at last, we got out of the lacke and went to the conveyances and spent the rest of the night the best that we could." And Mrs. Wood [laughed?] at their terrible [experiences?].

"We got a good bath for once, "said Mr. Wood.

"Then we moved to Clovis in 1910

Library of Congress

But once before [????] to Clovis, "said Mrs. Wood, "I went to Melrose to get some feed and take it out to the claim, and the children were with me. The ponies were very small and the wagon light, but we piled it full of grain and food. One of the horses [gave?] out. It was dark and finally some of the children went up to a house [bout a mile and got another wagon to bring a horse?], but the children did not know the road back so the woman took the wron road, and after an [?] long time the got there and we drove in home away after the middle of the night.

The first school house stood where the Eugene Field School now [stands?]. It was [a tow?] room house. Mr. JL F. Taylor was the first to cher. The primary [groceries?] were taught in a tin shed, which had been used as a skating rink.

Mr. Wood was black smith for eight years. He was appointed depty sheriff in 1918 and served four years, when he was elected sheriff which office he held for four years. I asked if he had 5 any trouble much when he was sheriff.

"No, nothing to speak of. I collected twenty-three stills."

Did they men resent you taking them? How did you do it?" I asked. "Oh, I'd find, go get'em and take 'em." He said in his crisp way of talking.

"This town was developing fast. There was a race track down Mitchel Street, at one time.

One morning I went down town [ans?] saw a man sitting down against a building taking on. I asked him what was the matter. "I'm sea sick," he said.

"Sea sick? How is that there is no water in 100 miles of here." [ianswered?].

"I'm sea sick from riding these waves on the street."

Mr. Wood has been caretaker for the Golf course for the last few years.

Library of Congress

His Son Hugh M. Wood Jr. is manager of Roy Smith Tailor Shop. He lives on Main Street 1213.

Mrs. Wallace Carmack [914?] Mitchel St. is his daughter. Mr. Carmack is manager of Mandel Drygood store.

Mr. and Mrs. Wood have a beautiful home at 711 Wallace Street, and he takes great delight in keeping the lawn of this home and the duplex house just south of him.